

FOSTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

Location:

Benjamin Eddy Building  
6 South Killingly Road  
Foster, RI 02825

Tuesday, May 24, 2011  
Open Session - 7:00 pm

1. **Convene Meeting** – Chair, Kathleen Swanson, called the meeting of the Foster School Committee to order on May 24, 2011 at 7:01 pm.

*a. Roll Call* – All members were present. Chair, Kathleen Swanson, Vice Chair, Shelley Pezza, member, Patricia Fountain, Superintendent/Principal, Dr. Davida Irving, Legal Counsel, Greg Piccirilli, and FSC secretary, Helena McCullough.

*b. Pledge of Allegiance* – Everyone in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **Public Comment** – Two citizens stated their comments to the Foster School Committee.
  - 1) Mr. Cervasio spoke to combining services with the Regional School District to save money for students in order to set policy to educate.
  - 2) Mrs. Whitelaw spoke to the monitors being on buses and the state law requiring them.

**3. Approval of Minutes** – On a motion by Mrs. Fountain and seconded by Ms. Pezza the Foster School Committee accepted the minutes of April 26, 2011 as amended. Correction = “Mrs. Fountain reported that she had stopped the process of developing an RFP for Legal Services due to the F/G Regional School Committee rehiring the same attorney. The School Committee will ask the attorney for a contract proposal.” Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

On a motion by Ms. Pezza seconded by Mrs. Fountain, the Foster School Committee approved the “Sealed” Executive Session minutes of April 26, 2011. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

**4. Approval of Warrants** - Chair, Mrs. Swanson entertained a motion to approve the Warrant dated May 11, 2011 in the amount of \$333,694.67. Ms. Pezza so moved and Mrs. Fountain seconded. Discussion followed. Motion passed. Vote = 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mrs. Swanson – yes

Ms. Pezza – yes

Mrs. Fountain – no. Mrs. Fountain opposed the warrant because of questions she has had every month that have not been answered and if the questions are answered next month, the School Committee will revisit the subject.

## **5. New Business (for discussion/action)**

*a. Budget 2011-2012* – Dr. Irving spoke to the 2011-2012 budget that was passed at the Financial Town Meeting.

*1) Monitors* – Dr. Irving explained the law pertaining to the use of bus monitors. She provided the School Committee with a copy of the law and reviewed the three variances that can be granted by RIDE.

The first is Zone Monitor – an adult who is present to meet the children as they enter or disembark at each bus stop with a public address system.

The second is Door-to-Door Kindergarten through grade five – children are picked up and dropped off on the same side of the road that they reside.

The third is Door-to Door Kindergarten – children are picked up and dropped off on the same side of the road that they reside.

The Foster School Department was granted the second variance, which is door-to-door K-5.

Mrs. Swanson entertained a motion to accept Dr. Irving's proposal of a lay-off, but not special education monitors, for the 2011-2012 school year with the understanding the Foster School Department will have an approved bus monitor variance in place from RIDE prior to the start of the 2011-2012 school year. Ms. Pezza seconded. Discussion followed.

Mr. Piccirilli clarified the motion should be as the monitors are not the school department's employees: that you are asking the bus company to present a proposal for the elimination of bus monitors through the variance approval through the RIDE. Mrs. Swanson and Ms. Pezza withdrew their original motion.

Mrs. Swanson asked Mr. Piccirilli to re-state the proper motion: to request the bus company present a proposal for the elimination of bus monitors with the approval to the variance program through the RIDE. Mrs. Swanson so moved and Ms. Pezza seconded. Discussion followed. Motion passed. Vote = 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mrs. Swanson – yes

Ms. Pezza – yes

Mrs. Fountain - no

*2) Secretarial Positions* – on a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mrs. Fountain, the School Committee voted to approved the Superintendent's recommendation to cut one Secretarial position to twenty (20) hours per week. Discussion followed. Motion passed. Vote = 2-0-1.

Vote as follows:

Mrs. Swanson – yes

Ms. Pezza – yes

Mrs. Fountain – abstained – pending an updated contract, pending the information regarding the health care benefits.

- 3) *Custodial Positions* – The Superintendent recommended reducing the hours of one full time and one part time custodian. On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mrs. Fountain, the School Committee directed the Superintendent to inform the Essential Support Personnel Union the opportunity to collectively bargain proposed changes to their work schedule prior to the Foster School Committee vote. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

b. Substitute Compensation – School Nurse / Teacher – on a motion by Mrs. Swanson seconded by Ms. Pezza, the School Committee vote to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to increase the sub pay for a School Nurse/Teacher from \$75.00 per day to \$150.00 per day. Discussion followed. Motion passed. Vote = 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mrs. Swanson – yes

Ms. Pezza – yes

Mrs. Fountain – no

c. Federal Funding – Parent Involvement Policy – on a motion by Mrs. Fountain and seconded by Ms. Pezza, the School Committee voted accept Parent Involvement Policy #10000 that was initially adopted June 26, 2006 and to add a new approval date on the policy. Discussion followed. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

d. Wellness Committee – Update – Mrs. Swanson updated the School Committee on the Wellness Committee. The Committee is comprised of the school nurse/teacher, Mrs. Soscia, a representative from Sodexo, the physical education teacher and parents. They are working on the policy itself, Healthy US School Challenge, the school lunch meeting the standards and also Farm to school lunch program.

e. Truancy Policy – Dr. Irving provided the School Committee with the first draft of the FSD Truancy Policy. On a motion by Ms. Pezza and by Mrs. Fountain, the School Committee accepted the FSD Truancy Policy as a first reading as presented by Dr. Irving. Discussion followed. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

## **6. Old Business (for discussion/action)**

### a. Roof Collapse –

1) *Update* – Dr. Irving handed members of the School Committee two site reports by Odeh Engineering Inc. She read a letter from Mr. David Odeh addressing concerns that the Superintendent had. Mr. Odeh laid to rest any rumors concerning signing a waiver of any kind concerning the integrity of the trusses. He further explained that the truss installation work is being closely monitored by Odeh Engineering. The roof truss structure is designed beyond the building code of 35#’s / square foot at 40#’s / square foot and will probably exceed 60#’s / square foot of snow, which was determined after a ‘snow load’ test was done.

- 2) *2010-2011 Calendar* – Mrs. Fountain spoke to the 2010-2011 calendar after receiving several calls from teachers and parents regarding the last day of school. Dr. Irving explained that the requests to RIDE and the Board of Regents to reschedule the last day of school were different for the School Districts. The motions made at Glocester and the Regional School Committee meetings did not match. The three Superintendents' should have submitted the same request and this has been a learning experience.

*b. Budget 2010-2011* – There were no questions for this item.

*c. Budget 2011-2012* – This was discussed earlier during the meeting.

*d. Legal Services* – Mrs. Swanson provided a letter from Mr. Piccirilli with his hourly rate for the School committee members to review.

*e. NECAP Scores* – Dr. Irving supplied and presented her skeletal 'Corrective Action Plan'. The work is ongoing and will involve the School Improvement Team, Teachers, and Administrators.

On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mrs. Swanson, the School Committee directed the Superintendent to look into the cost / grant availability for a summer school program for students at Captain Isaac Paine School. Discussion followed. Mrs. Fountain recommended to the Superintendent to have an action plan that reflects utilization of resources that the district currently has without additional expenditures. Motion passed. Vote = 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mrs. Swanson – yes

Ms. Pezza – yes

Mrs. Fountain – no

*f. Budget Review Committee Recommendations* – Mrs. Fountain asked the secretary several questions concerning procedures for purchasing and payroll.

*g. Resource Sharing with the Region – Technology* – Dr. Irving has asked Dr. Barnes several times for a contract of services from the Region. It is difficult to move forward until Dr. Irving knows and understands what the Regional will offer.

## **7. Communication/Reports**

*a. Correspondence* – a letter from the Bristol-Warren Regional School District asking support of their school committee resolution. This will be on the June agenda.

Mr. Alfred Cairone submitted his resume requesting to be on the School Building Committee. The Chair, Mrs. Swanson, appointed Mr. Cairone to the Building Committee on May 24, 2011.

*b. Superintendent's Report* – Dr. Irving reported:

Fourth Graders took the Science NECAP on May 9, 10, & 11.

Staff meeting, led by Mrs. Seitler, focused on the NECAP results.

Shane Marx, third grader, won the Grand Prize for his poster in the Scituate Water-shed contest.

Grade two had a field trip to Mystic Aquarium on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

Grade five went to observe the Declaration of Independence on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Grade three is scheduled to go to RISD Museum of Art with Mrs. Bergtrom on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Field Day is scheduled for the entire school at the Woody Lowden on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

Grade four will attend Life Cycles Audubon presentation on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

Grade five Bike Hike is scheduled for June 16<sup>th</sup>, rain date 17<sup>th</sup>.

She thanked the PTG for providing the resources for the field trips and end of the year events.

She informed the School Committee of two technology grants, with special thanks to Mrs. Seitler for writing, presenting and revising. Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Bergstrom will attend this technology workshop along with Ms. Cosgrove and Mrs. Krikstone and all will be presented with \$4000 of technology. Total of the grants was \$16,000.

She reported on the terrible condition of the North West Special Education building.

There are leaks and the roof is in disrepair. They may need to move to a different location if the repairs can not be done which would result in a \$12,000 loss for the Foster School Department.

*c. Future Agenda Items* – Legal Counsel letter, Questions from two Warrants from two meetings ago and this Warrant, recognition of students, BCI Policy, and the purchase order procedures / payroll.

On a motion by Ms. Pezza and Mrs. Fountain seconded, the School Committee voted making the next meeting on June 21, 2011 as amended. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

**8. On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mrs. Fountain, the School Committee voted to go into Executive Session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business referred to in R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a) (1) Personnel (2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation.** Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

**9. Reconvene Open Session** – On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mrs. Fountain, the School Committee voted to reconvene Open Session at 11:00 pm. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

Mrs. Swanson, Chair, reported out on the Executive Session that negotiations and current litigation were discussed and that no votes were taken.

On a motion by Ms. Pezza seconded by Mrs. Fountain, the School Committee voted to “Seal” the Executive Session minutes. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

**10. Adjournment** – On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mrs. Swanson, the School Committee voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 pm. Motion passed.  
Vote = 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Helena McCullough  
Secretary Foster School Committee